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Paper March 3^d

W. S. H

Dress

An Essay

on

Gynaeche Trachealis or Group

By

Correll Humphrey

— November 1813 —

8.

Poplar Street
H. 2. 14
S. 100

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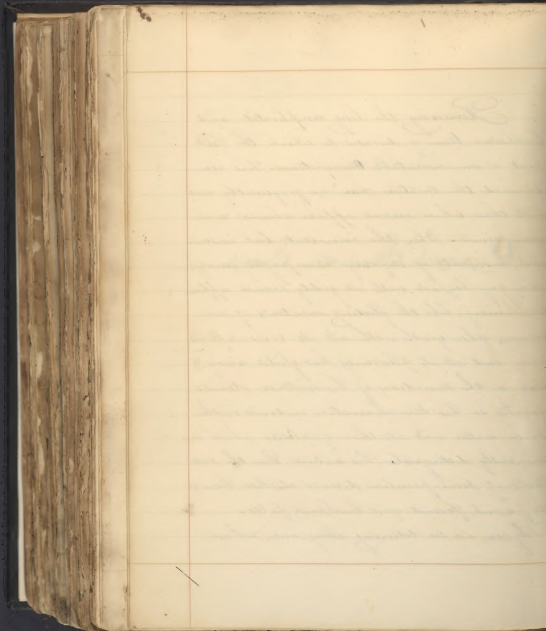
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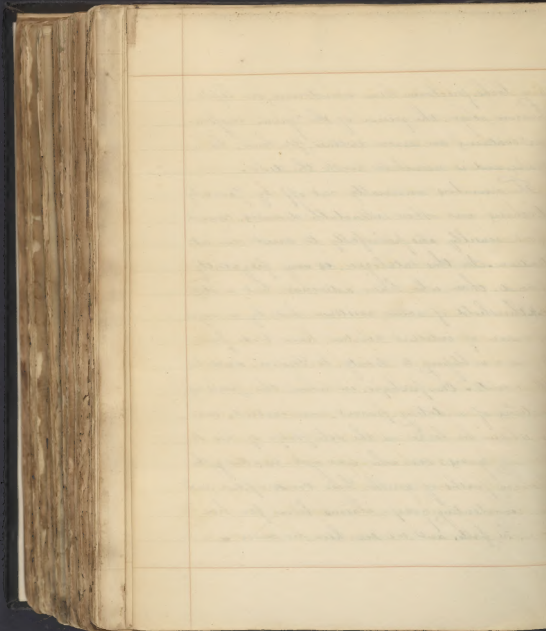
Reviewing the long, complicated, and
loathsome train of disease to which the just
Gnat of an inscrutable Omnipotence, has con-
demned the "Creature man," we frequently meet
with those, whose arrows appear almost exclu-
sively aimed - When the innocent, but insen-
sible, moments of infancy have passed away;
when gay boyhood, with its giddy recess, appears
to memory, like the fleeting incidents of a
dream; when youth, with all its vices, all its
errors, and all its pleasures has glided away, &
man, in the meridian of his existence, stands
revealed in his true character, endowed with
reason, virtue and all those qualities which so
eminently distinguish his nature; how the sub-
sistent of some peculiar disease strikes him &
the parent, friend, and husband falls -

Again, we see tottering along, one, whose

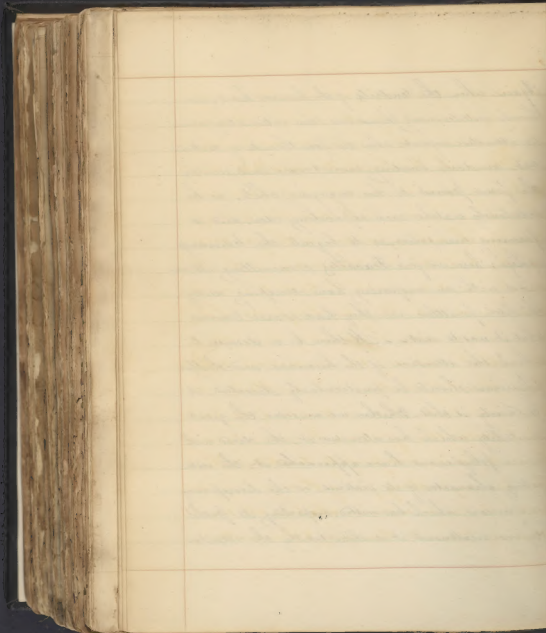


grey locks, proclaim him wandering, on life's
narrow verge; the quiver of the "grim messenger"
contains an arrow destined for him; he
sinks, and is numbered with the dead.

The numbers annually cut off by Fever, by
Phthisis and other intractable diseases, cannot
fail, sensibly and painfully to arrest our at-
tention. In this catalogue, is very frequently
found, those who have advanced but a step
on the threshold of active existence, but, by a rapid
expansion of intellect & virtue, have bade fair
to prove a blessing to Society, to Science, and to
the world. - One, perhaps, in whom the fond af-
fections of a doting parent, were centered, and
to whom he looked as the sole prop of his de-
clining years; one, who was yet breathing the
flowery breath of youth; there Consumption, with
her concluding grasp, claims him for her
own. He falls, and we see him no more.

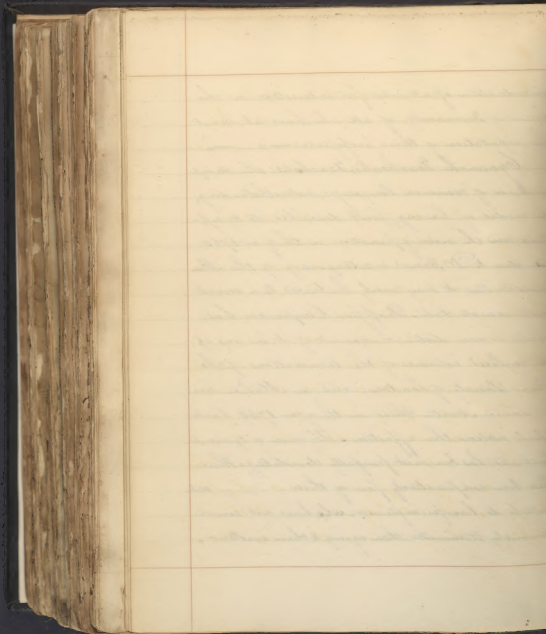


Again, when the tendrils of the human heart, are hourly intertwining themselves so intimately around the attractive infant; when the fine threads of nature's web, are daily binding more & more indissolubly, the fond parent to his engaging child, as he sedulously watches each expanding idea, and is framing new schemes to beguile the tediousness of life; here we find Thachitis committing its ravages, with an unparrying hand, sweeping away the little prattlers, ere they had scarce known what it was to exist - If there be a disease, to which the attention of the humane and skillful physician should be particularly directed, it certainly is this. Whether we consider the great mortality which has attended it; the dread with which physicians have approached it; the interesting character of its victims, or the discrepancy of opinion, which has existed, respecting its pathology, and treatment, it is alike worthy the attention



consideration of all who feel interested in the
cause of Humanity; of all who have at heart
the reputation of their profession — " —

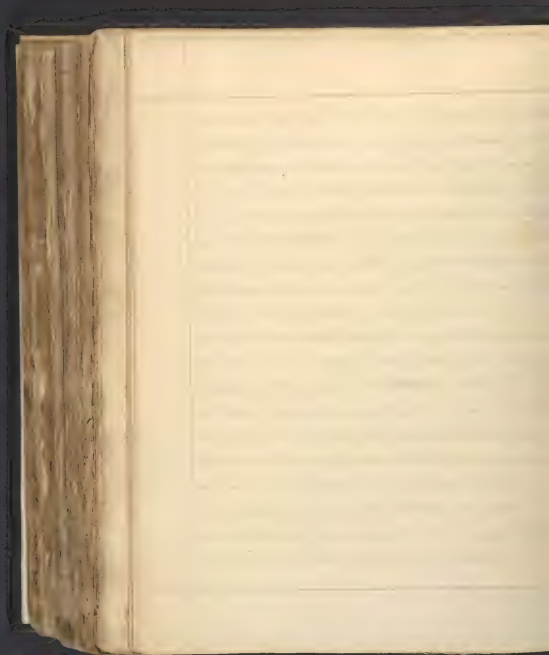
Cynanche Trachealis; *Tracheitis*; the croup
or whooping cough; notwithstanding
the credit of having first described its symp-
toms, and the mode of practice, in the year 1765
is due to Dr. Hume, a cotemporary of the illus-
trious Cullen; it may easily be traced to a much
more remote date. Professor Chapman has
found a very distinct account of it, in one of
the earliest volumes of the transactions of the
Royal Society of London; and an Italian scien-
tist named Martin Rhisi in the year 1749 particu-
larly notices this affection. The course of *Cynanche*
Trachealis, has been most fearfully devastating. There
have been comparatively few of those merely sub-
jected to its laudal influence, who have not simulta-
neously terminated, their agony & their existence;



in fact, so universally was this the case that the affec-
tion, "*epidemic malarium*" was, by name, first im-
posed to it; as a disease in which Fevers, Doctrinal
their symptoms, were to be seen; when in fact the
were & death inevitable. It may be asked, how was
did this arise? In the first place, the view taken of its
pathology was erroneous, and of consequence, the
the founded theory, was incorrect, feeble & inert -
The nature of the affection is, in itself, highly danger-
ous, and requires a prompt recurrence to vigorous
and decisive measures; instead of this, considering ac-
like ague, as less often than actual malarium, they
attempted to subdue the disease by the administration
of remedies entirely inappropriate; or, by assuming a
wrong plan at first, but yielding their weapons, with
to tremulous, fluctuating, and indecisive a hand, that
instead of making the impression intended, they so-
the aggravated the calamity - " - Without un-
tempting to bring into view the various theories

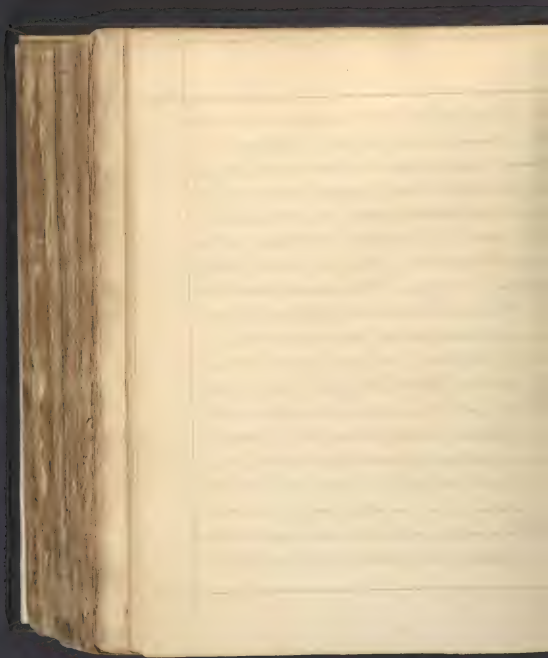


entertained, and the various modes of practice thence de-
duced, permit me simply to mention, that by systematic
writers generally, it has been divided into Inflammation
and Spasmodic, but that according to the views of
Gorham Chapman, in which he is sanctioned, by the
Honourable of the House, and by Post-Mortem examina-
tions, "at first, there is either a spasmodic or inflam-
matory affection of the Larynx, and in its subsequent
stages, it partakes of one or other forms of Pneumonia
or oedema"; then is either a sanguineous congest-
ion of the Lungs, or they are engorged with mu-
cus or Lymph. We are certainly, be fully, justified in
pronouncing that case Spasmodic, where the child is
suddenly awakened during the night, with a dry strid-
ulous cough, which bears some resemblance to the strid-
ulous cough of a dog; the active, irritated pulse, an anxious
and indescribably wretched expression of countenance and
a difficulty of respiration, amounting in some in-
stances to almost suffocation; then, symptoms occur



ring, suddenly, and without any previous manifestation of diseased action, the case is Spasmodic, and is one of the most frequent, as well as most dangerous forms of the disease, speedily terminating the existence of the afflicted innocent, unless prompt and active measures be instantly adopted, and boldly carried into practice. - Again, we find the disease commencing gradually, with the ordinary catarrhal symptoms, such as heaviness, suffusion of countenance, defluxions from the eyes and nose, a harder and more hoarse cough, than usual, with various degrees of fever, which, with the cough is always exacerbated at night; here we have an inflammatory stage, dependent probably on cold, for its exciting cause, or perhaps, on a degree of spasmodic constriction, as, when this exists for a length of time, inflammation is an inevitable consequence. -

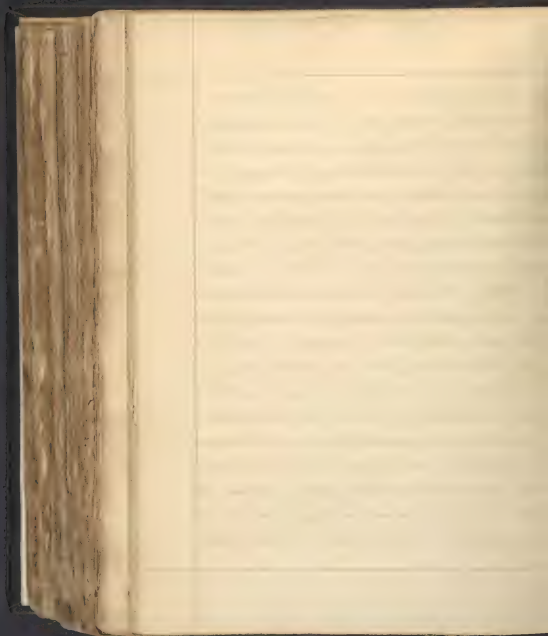
By Thomas and some other writers, it is said, that, "Croup never attacks a person arrived at puberty" - True it is



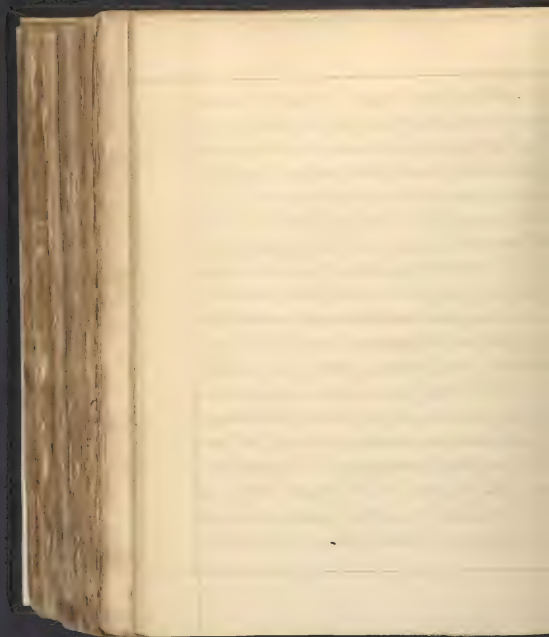
that the full 4 of this painful affection, are most
commonly, from 1 to 5 yrs. of age; yet, there have been
instances, where adults have been afflicted by it. Dr.
Chapman, in his lectures, relates the cases of two La-
dies in this city, to whom he has been called in repeated
attacks of Croup, and so strongly (says he) are they
predisposed to it, that they scarcely ever escape when
exposed to its causes. "These cases are to be considered
as anomalous, deviations from the ordinary
course and character of the disease". Among the
causes by which it is most frequently induced, may
be ranked some of the applications of Cote; it is found
to be most prevalent in those situations where the atmo-
sphere is damp, cold & austere, and more particularly
on the seaboard. In proceeding to the treatment of
Tracheitis, it may with propriety be perceived, that
even admitting the distinction, so strenuously contended
for, it does not necessarily lead to any particular dif-
ference in practice; depletion in both cases is equally



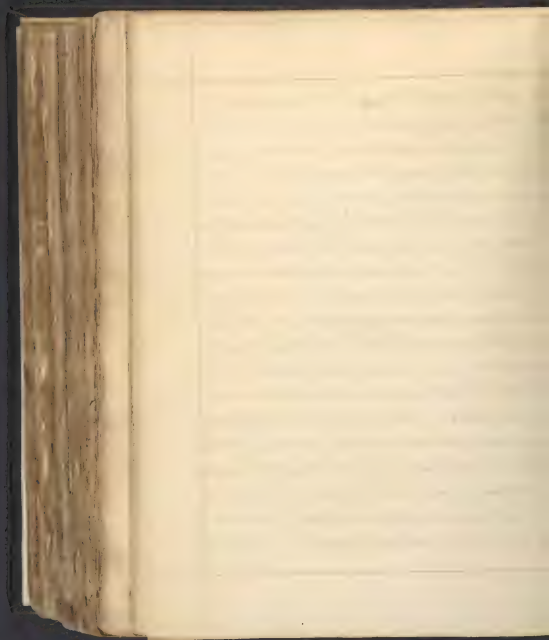
beneficial, and the exhibition of antispasmodics, if
so injurious, at least entirely useless. - "Completely
formed there is no material difference between the two
species, and henceforward their progress, is nearly or ex-
actly similar." Called in the commencement then
of an attack of Croup, we in the first place endeavor
to produce Emesis, and for this purpose Tart. of
Antimony, at short intervals, is probably one of the
best articles with which we are acquainted - Its opera-
tion may be expedited, by putting the patient for 10 or
15 min. into a warm bath, if vomiting is thus indu-
ced. The patient in many cases will get well without
further medicine; but when not induced, or the desired
end is not obtained by it, v. s. is to be resorted to
and carried to a considerable length, at the same time
savouring the Tart. Ant. & warm bath. In a majority
of cases the symptoms will now yield; if however, they
should not, which will sometimes happen, a blister is
to be applied to the throat & Leeches to the back of the



neck. When the attack is of so very violent a nature as
to resist all the preceding attempts to subvert it, and our
patient appears fast sinking under its violence, we im-
mediately seize the Lancet & bleed "ad deliquium". This is a
point of practice, to the omission, or neglect of which
no doubt many lives, which might otherwise have been
saved, and perhaps have proved a blessing to the world,
have been wantonly sacrificed. The patient viewing
its apparently dying child, saw hardly he made to be
seen, but that further depletion must inevitably hos-
ten its fate; and the physician, although he may
be sensible of its importance, either advises the mea-
sure in so hesitating a manner, as merely to have
the effect of confirming the friends of the patient
in their objections; or, fearful of incurring the respon-
sibility necessarily attending it, he neglects con-
sidering the proposal, and thus suffers death to take
possession of his victims, without making that decided
effort to save, or to remove it from his lungs; that



effort which is seldom ^{the} obligingness to relinquish his
hold. But the generality of mankind should labour under the
impression, that extreme depletion (more particularly in the delicacies
in case of young patients, cannot but prove per-
nicious is very natural. They are not aware of the wonder-
ful powers with which nature has gifted children, by
which they are enabled to resist the attacks of disease
and hence to bear extreme depletion of every kind, to an ex-
tent, which comparatively speaking, would exhaust the
vital energies of an adult; that this is a fact, there
cannot be a doubt. Mothers have been found
clasped in the arms of death, from exposure to in-
tense cold, while the infant at her bosom has re-
tained its powers of life, and smiled delightedly
on those who approached to rescue it - also while con-
tagion has been sweeping off its thousands, snatching
out of the same family sinking under its force, the
infant has been found apparently adding defiance
to its attacks, or if attacked, regaining its health with



rapidity truly astonishing - It is, and seldom
now be carried to a considerable extent is susceptible of
being deduced both from experience & physical facts -
It is a point as well established as any other in Phy-
siology, that previous to puberty, the glands bear
a better proportion to the system than they afterwards do.

This vascular fulness, cannot but render the sys-
tem more susceptible of inflammatory action; conse-
quently diseases generally bear depletion better, or to
a greater extent, before, than after that period -

Tally improper with this fact, it becomes the duty
of a Physician, when called to an extreme case (of Cramp
particularly) to endeavour in the first place to over-
come the scruples & prejudices of relatives, by impressively
assuring them, that recovery is impossible, unless this
brusque & energetic measure be instantly adopted, and to
point out the probability of its succeeding - If seconded by
that confident tone & manner, which ought always to mark
the conduct of the Physician, conscious of acting for the best,



to cure almost invariably succeeds, and generally, will
be rewarded, by a happy termination of the affection.
From the time this practice was introduced, opinions somewhat
doubtful; it has however found two of its most zealous
Vall. advocates, in Professors Caw & Chapman - this
school, and to others is most unquestionably, to be accorded
the merit of having, both by their practice, and by the
expression of their sentiments, in their public lectures, in-
troduced it, into almost general use. In proof of its ef-
ficacy, and of the reliance placed by Dr. Caw in this mode
of treatment, I may here cite a case of one of his own
children, mentioned in his lectures - About midnight, the
child awoke with all the ordinary symptoms of Croup.
Ant. Ant. was immediately resorted to, and administered
to a great extent, without the desired effect - its face be-
came livid; its extremities cold; respiration was almost
suspended, and in fact it exhibited all the symptoms of
approaching dissolution. Bloodletting was then resorted to,
and 3ij were drawn; the effect was obvious, and the



alarming symptoms yielded in a measure, but the im-
provement was not permanent, and in a short time they all
returned; the vein was again opened, and blood to the amount
of 3ij taken - This was followed by a subsidence of the symp-
toms; but the passing of the urine was very painful,
as soon the infectious or venereal virus came to be
discharged with augmented violence - The Doctor & the parent
now describes himself, as scarce knowing what steps
to run - On the one hand, it appeared that further
dissection must inevitably destroy his child, & exhaust-
ing the powers of the father; on the other, he laboured under
the full conviction, that dissection must soon take place,
until some decisive measure was adopted; as he had not
perceived the good effect of it in the two former attacks
his resolution overcame his feelings; he secured the con-
sent, and a third time opened the vein; blood was drawn
to the amount of 3ij when the symptoms gave way,
and the disease was completely overcome; and, says the
Doctor, 'I was astonished to see the rapid recovery of the



child. Nothing more seems necessary to prove its utility
and to convince the sceptical, than to direct their attention
to the comparatively trifling degree of mortality, which
now attends it. Once, however, among the Cyprian mela-
ecorum, death, marching its progress at every step, it is
now met by Physicians generally, with a confidence they
dare not extend, to saving other diseases of this tender age.

The violent symptoms, or the affection is subdued,
we next endeavour to evacuate the alimentary canal &
for this purpose large doses of Calomel are best.

In this circumstance happens, the cough, a
tightness of chest, & deficiency of expectoration remains,
the Soligala Senega, or some other expectorant, must be
administered. The Senega is, perhaps the best.

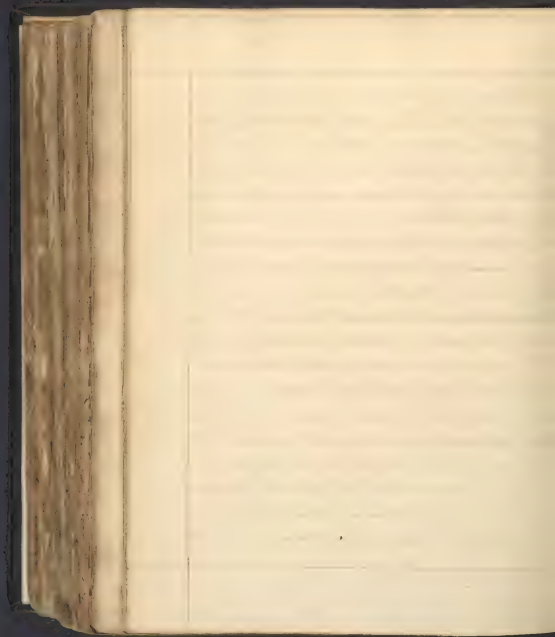
These remarks are to be particularly to attend in the
early stages, when the disease is solely confined to the
Larynx, or at best to the upper portion of the Trachea.
But when it has existed for 10 or 15 hours, it assumes
a new and highly dangerous aspect. The Pronchitis or



10 Submucous cells, having now become improductive, respiration is impeded by the secretion & stoppage of large quantities of mucus or Lymph; or, by a congestion of the Lungs from blood. All the symptoms of an interrupted circulation are now present. The eyes are prominent and inflamed, with, mostly, injected, humid, the complexion is mottled, respiration is very laborious, attended with a full & disturbed heart. The countenance has a white and haggard appearance. In most cases it requires the nicest discrimination to form a just diagnosis, the symptoms in the two forms, bearing a very close resemblance to each other; this, however is essentially necessary, in order to lead to a correct mode of practice. When it proceeds from collections of mucus or Lymph evidences of such accumulations are generally manifested; there is an expectoration of a pinkish secretion. The respiration is attended by a peculiar rattling noise, caused probably by the air forcing its way between the obstructing masses of mucus.



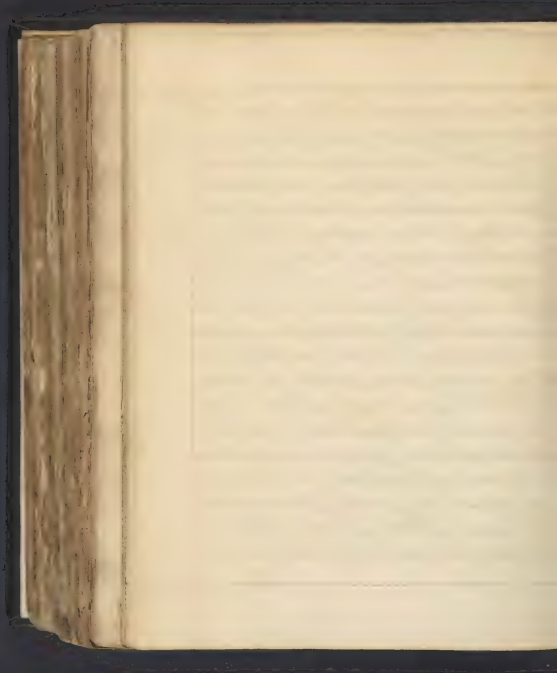
Languineous congestion in the cerebrum is accom-
panied by this discharge, and the peculiar "heping" so
invariably an attendant of the other, is not observ-
able here; in the former case the pulse is languid
whereas here it is full, though very irregular and easily
compressible - Children as well as adults are
and "phthoric habit" are particularly liable to the
latter form - One first indication in a case of the
first form, is to free the pulmonary organs from
their burden, and to re-establish a healthy cir-
culation - An emetic of Tart. Ant. or what is preferable,
the juice of onion or Garlic, is to be immediately
administered & if possible repeated according to indications,
and as in the former stage of Croup, so here, the warm
bath will much assist its operation. It is equally
to possess it. There is little more of this practice
usually surprising, and have frequently proved suc-
cessfully successful than any other which has
been resorted to - In addition to the testimony which



could exist, to this effect, I will here mention, con-
sulted to me an eminent practitioner of this city.
His daughter, aged 29, laboured under Circum of a most
obstinate character; every thing which considerable ex-
perience in treating the disease could suggest, or pe-
nal solicitude could devise, was put into requisition, but
without avail; the susceptibility of the system to med-
icinal impression seemed entirely exhausted, and every
effort to restore it, by ordinary means, proved unavailing.
Discouraged by his fruitless exertions, and expressing, at
moment, the little sufferer would breathe her last, he oc-
curred, requesting to be called when the agonizing conflict was
over; What however, practical skill, experience, and the
persevering efforts of a Father could not effect, ma-
ternal affection, happily accomplished; blisters
were applied to the epigastric region, while at the
same time, a quantity of juice was conveyed into the
stomach, the effect was almost instantaneous, and
in a few minutes, instead of beholding his child, in



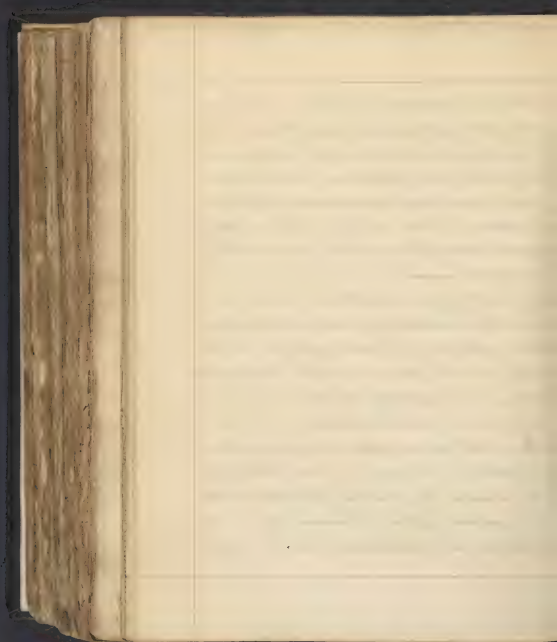
the cold embrace of death, the victim Luther ex-
tends, to re-vitalize nature, and to induce a speedy
recovery - After copious vomiting, vesicatories are to
be resorted to; either cloths wrung out of hot water
& applied so as to blister, or, a blister is to be applied
over the heart - We now endeavour to keep up a
free discharge of mucus, by the free use of expec-
torants; Antimonial wine, & the Inhalations of
Quills answer this purpose very well; Calomel has
been used and is highly extolled, by many practition-
ers - The Pine Syrup of a late date, has obtained a high
degree of celebrity, and from the success attending
its exhibition, appears to merit well, the confidence
of the Medical Faculty - In cases of sanguineous
congestion after having promised an emetic, the con-
tracting vesicatories, as in the other form, there is to be
drawn, but with very great care, lest we induce too
great a degree of debility, which would be the
inevitable consequence of a hasty and in-



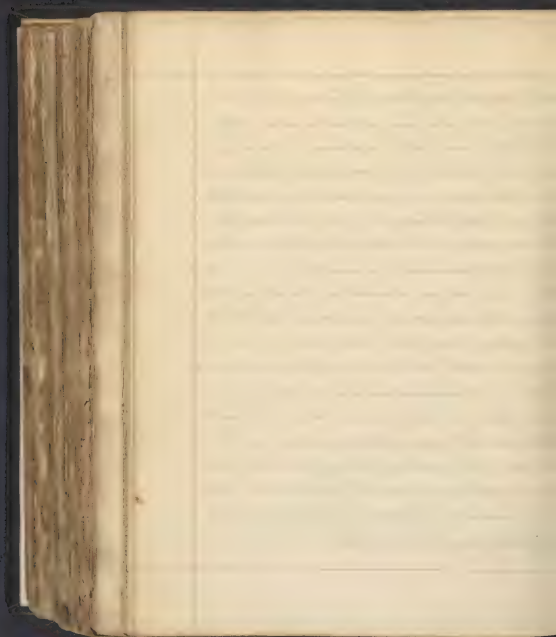
cautious detraction of blood - An engorgement of the pulmonary organs "takes out of the general circulation, such a large portion of blood, and confines it in so much a part, that any considerable loss by section, is very sensibly felt, creating in some cases prompt and irreparable exhaustion." —

If existing circumstances preclude the use of the ^{Scalpel} Lancet, topical depletion by means of Cupps or Leeches, applied to the back is to be resorted to. The subsequent treatment is precisely the same as in the other form of the disease.

Much controversy has arisen respecting the existence of a large coagulable lymph in the Larynx, by which suffocation is sometimes induced. Since, however, copious depletion in the treatment has been gener-

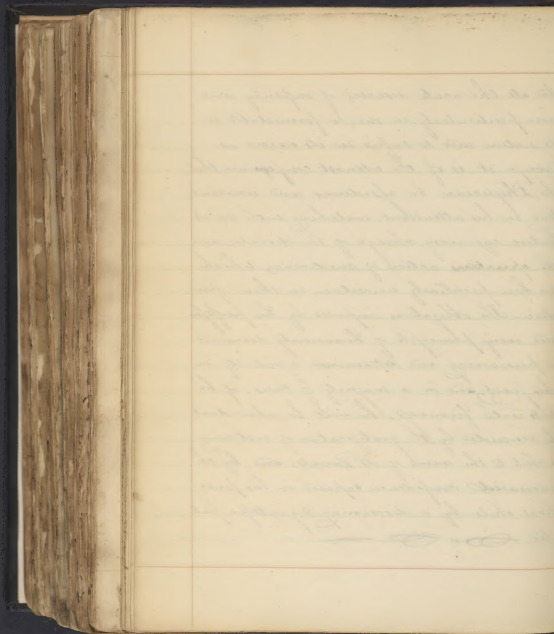


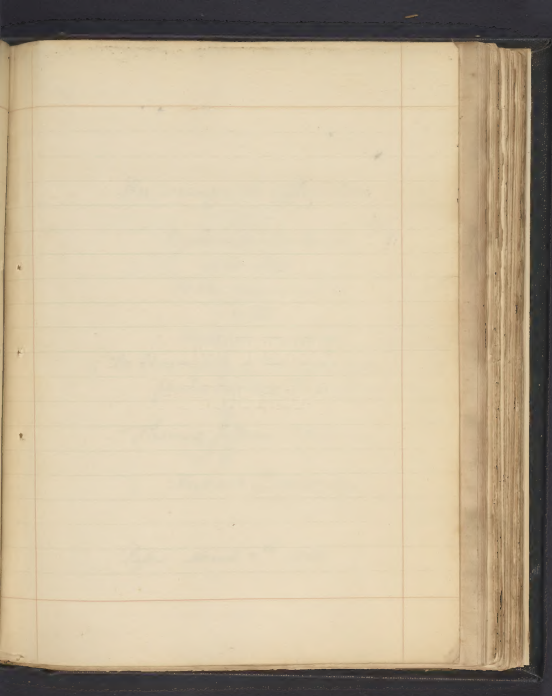
ally adopted, dissections prosecuted for the
purpose of proving it, have almost invariably
failed to prove the existence of such a
membrane; the appearances exhibited, have
been the same as are usually presented
where a slight degree of inflammation
has existed - That it has existed, occasion-
ally, and probably been the cause of death
there can be no doubt as such assertions
have been made by persons entitled to
the most implicit confidence; cases too,
are recorded where a rapid recovery has
followed its expulsion by coughing or a
surgical operation; yet it is probable
that in the generality of cases, where the
disease had advanced so far, an opera-
tion would prove merely palliative, and
only have the effect of prolonging the
sufferings of the patient - " - "



In all the acute diseases of infancy, and more particularly, in one, so formidable in its nature and so rapid in its career as Croup it is of the utmost consequence that the Physician be assiduous and unremitting in his attentions, watching with an attentive eye every change of the disease, and the ~~operations~~ action of medicines which are here peculiarly uncertain in their operation. The obligations imposed by his profession and every principle of humanity demand a persevering and determined assiduity on his part, and in a majority of cases, if he acts with firmness, he will be abundantly rewarded by the gratification of restoring a child to the arms of its Parents, and by the increased confidence reposed in his practical skills by a discerning & grateful public

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